

REMARKS

In the February 10, 2006 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-22 and 25-32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(c) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0111360 to Albanese, and rejected claims 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Albanese.

Applicants previously pointed out to the Examiner that each pending claim of the present application includes in one form or another the requirement that “a minimum degree of affinity correlation constituting a match *varies depending on the proximity* of said first and second users.” Applicants thereafter amended the claims to further indicate that the minimum degree of affinity “varies as a function of” proximity of the first and second users. The Examiner apparently did not understand the Applicants use of the term function in the amended claims. Applicants have now amended the claims to further reflect that the fact that the claimed system requires more than a user simply entering a preferred distance and/or preferred affinity level into the system as is disclosed by Albanese. Applicants have now amended the claims to further clarify that the system calculates a scaled distance and a combined match value and then compares the combined match value to a threshold. Applicants further have added claim 33 to recite the quadratic combining such as that described in paragraph [0046] of the application.

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of the present patent application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of the present patent application to issue, she is invited to call on the number below.

Applicants hereby request a one-month extension of time and have paid them fee by credit card in the electronic filing of this Amendment.

If any other fees are due in connection with this application, including those for the new claims and any necessary extension of time, such fees may be charged to PTO Deposit Account 50-2837.

Respectfully submitted,

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